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TRIBUTE TO CHIEF JUDGE RODNEY S. WEBB

HONORABLE ROGER L. WOLLMAN*

I count it an honor to be able to join in paying tribute to Judge Webb in recognition of the distinguished judicial service he has rendered during his more than fourteen years of service as a member of the federal judiciary.

In addition to conferring with him frequently with respect to matters that fell within his jurisdiction as Chief Judge of the District of North Dakota, it was my privilege to work closely with Judge Webb on the Eighth Circuit Judicial Council during my term as chief judge. I was immediately impressed by his tremendous capacity for work, his seriousness of purpose, and his unwavering commitment to ensuring that the administration of justice within his district and throughout the Eighth Circuit was carried out in an effective, expeditious manner. He has a rare ability to cut through to the heart of a problem, to come quickly to a reasoned, practical solution, and to then move on to the next task at hand.

It was this gift of administrative ability that resulted in Judge Webb's appointment by the Chief Justice of the United States to the United States Judicial Conference committee that oversees the operations of the Administrative Office of the United States Courts. He has performed his duties as a member of this committee with the same diligence and dedication that he has demonstrated in every position of public trust he has held.

Not only has Judge Webb served with great distinction on the United States District Court, he has sat by designation with us on the Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals on several occasions, and this at a time when he was carrying a heavy caseload in his own court. His most recent service on our court prompted one of the other judges on the panel to request that, in light of his excellent work, Judge Webb be invited to sit with us again at the earliest opportunity. This request carried with it special significance since it came from a former chief judge of our court.

It was at a time when he could rightfully have turned over to others the administrative duties that accompany the position of chief judge that Judge Webb once again demonstrated the commitment to public service that he has manifested throughout his career. Knowing that the District of North Dakota would be left without a judge in active service upon his assumption of senior status, Judge Webb expressed his willingness to continue to

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perform the duties of chief judge until a new judge could be appointed within the district. By unanimous vote, the members of the Judicial Council authorized Judge Webb to do so. This willingness to continue to perform judicial duties beyond those required by his position stands as yet another example of Judge Webb's unselfish service to his state and to the nation.

If one had to summarize the characteristics that have marked Judge Webb's judicial career, it would be to say that through his conduct and demeanor he has unfailingly reminded us that those who are privileged to serve on the federal bench should regard themselves as servants of justice rather than as wielders of judicial power. Judge Webb has carried out his judicial duties with dignity and dispatch; he has earned the respect and admiration of all who have learned to know him; and he is most deserving of the tributes that are being paid to him on these pages. It is with deep gratitude for the privilege of his friendship and for the opportunity to work with him that I wish him many years of happy, productive service as a senior judge.